

THE BYSTANDER —★—

Fake Thinking

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Using the same standards used by the *Fake News* accusers, I'm coining a new term to describe their super-sized hatred for Political Correctness: *Fake Thinking*.

All you need to do is to quote someone alleged PC statement, twist it into a pretzel, give it a spritz of venom, add aerodynamics so it will fly, and slingshot it back to the sender on an advertising banner with big letters spelling out "Leftist Hypocrisy."

The use of the cliché "PC" has been documented at least as far back as Nazi Germany, which granted permits "only to pure 'Aryans' whose opinions are politically correct." In the 1940's it was used "disparagingly, to refer to someone whose loyalty to the party line overrode compassion and led to bad politics" (Herbert Kohl). British journalist Polly Toynbee calls the phrase "an empty, right-wing smear, designed only to elevate its user."

PC terminology---the effort to use inclusive words for gender, race and culture---was introduced into our military well before I enlisted in 1978. As my unit Training NCO, I taught our Equal Opportunity workshops. Being a history buff, I thought everyone would be thrilled to hear a history of Supreme Court decisions on Civil Rights Cases. The Constitution---just what we had sworn to "support and defend, against all enemies, foreign and domestic." Imagine my surprise at being asked by a roomful of smarmy fellow soldiers "why do we have to learn this crap?"

Even less popular were my classes on Sexual Harassment. The eye-rolling and innuendo exemplified sexual discrimination in real time. Too bad those classes weren't effective; today our military has an even higher rate of sexual trauma, and the VA pays out millions in claims to its victims, both male and female. In 1979, my own Commanding Officer was found guilty of that same charge. Within a year, he'd been promoted.

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Fast-forward 36 years: what Trump said on the Billy Bush Bus Tape constitutes sexual assault under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. The UCMJ doesn't classify those words as a crime of "Political Correctness." It's classified as an actual crime. I was hoping that voters would be up in arms over an episode that couldn't be explained away with the claim of media bias, but they elected him anyway; a big promotion for him. Trump's photo now hangs in the lobby of every VA Medical Center, greeting veterans as they arrive for therapy for Military Sexual Trauma.

That's the best example of Fake Thinking I can offer: the antithesis of logic, oblivious of its own double standard, non-specific in its attack and in total submission to the Pseudo-Press Gazette. It's the child of hate and the parent of conspiracy theory. It feeds on ignorance and spawns propaganda. Like a broken clock, it might be right twice a day, but because of the slew of vitriol now emitted from both sides, we'll never know when to listen to each other, and when to agree. But the Fake Thinker will predictably and obediently follow the directions provided in paragraph two of this article.

It's difficult to analyze who fired the first verbal shots, and even more difficult to remember why we should care. If only the *Fake-Thinkers*, who are hard to distinguish from the *No-Thinkers*, would stop targeting PC as if it were their mortal enemy, we could discuss important issues under the microscope of scrutiny that is expected from an informed citizenry.

After all, they've got the Oval Office, the Senate and most of the Supreme Court. Are they sore winners, or just afraid of us little old lady "PC Liberals?"